

SCIENCE

And Technology Program



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From the 435 bird species that breed in the United States, 330 have been recorded in the Great Plains. Wetlands and grasslands are the primary habitats used by these species.

As of the mid-1980s, only about 103 million acres of the nation's wetlands remained from approximately 221 million at the time of European settlement in the early 1600s. This research study was designed to address data gaps in species distribution, community composition and habitat use by bird species on artificial wetlands/reservoirs in the southern Great Plains.

Native grasslands have been greatly affected by urbanization, mineral exploration, grazing, cultivation, wetland drainage, tree planting, and fire suppression. This research study will focus on species composition and the habitat use by grassland birds near a large surface water body in the southern Great Plains.

- Determine any significant correlation between reservoir use by aquatic birds to structural characteristics and environmental variables in the southern great plains.
- Document the presence, abundance, and habitat use by grassland bird species at Choke Canyon Reservoir.
- Attempt to begin development of population density estimates for the different species of grassland birds observed and habitat types use at a near reservoir site in the southern Great Plains.

Reservoir sites were selected and interagency agreements were finalized. Data collection will begin in FY 2000. A technical field crew has been retained to do the surveys.

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